

Nevada Youth Legislature: Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility

1. Who is eligible to be appointed to the Nevada Youth Legislature (NYL)?
2. Is there a minimum GPA required to serve on the NYL?
3. May students who attend private school, virtual school, or home school apply for appointment to the NYL?
4. May I apply for the NYL if I'm entering my senior year in high school next fall?
5. May I apply for the NYL while I'm in eighth grade?

Application Process

6. How many students will be appointed to the NYL?
7. Who is my Nevada State Senator?
8. May I download an electronic copy of my application?
9. May I submit my application electronically online?
10. Where do I send my NYL application materials?
11. What is the application deadline for appointment to the NYL?
12. The application requires a letter of recommendation. May I ask a family member to write this letter of recommendation on my behalf?
13. When will Youth Legislators be appointed to serve on the NYL?

Nevada Youth Legislature Activities

14. How often does the NYL meet, and how much time will I be expected to spend at these meetings?
15. In addition to NYL meetings, will I be required to participate in—or lead—other activities?
16. Will I need to miss school for NYL meetings, events, and activities?
17. Are Youth Legislators required to pay for their hotel and travel expenses for attending the annual NYL training program?
18. If I live in rural Nevada, am I eligible for reimbursement on travel expenses to and from the monthly meetings of the Nevada Youth Legislature?
19. As a Youth Legislator, how much contact will I have with my Legislators (Senate and Assembly)?

Attendance

- 20. What are the attendance requirements during my term of service?
- 21. If I know I'm going to miss a meeting or activity, whom do I contact to be excused?
- 22. If I miss a meeting or activity without requesting an excused absence in advance, what will happen?
- 23. How does having an unexcused absence affect me?

Terms of Appointment

- 24. How long are the terms of appointment for Youth Legislators?
- 25. May I serve for more than one term as a Youth Legislator?
- 26. If I move to a new state senatorial district during my term on the NYL, may I continue to represent my former State Senatorial District as a Youth Legislator?

Other Questions

- 27. Who makes decisions about the operation of the NYL program?
- 28. Is there someone—other than those listed above—whom I should contact if I have a question about the NYL?
- 29. After I complete my service as a Youth Legislator, are there opportunities for me to stay engaged with the program and its alumni?

Eligibility

1. Who is eligible to be appointed to the Nevada Youth Legislature (NYL)?

Each student who: (1) resides in the senatorial district of the State Senator who appoints the student; (2) is enrolled in public school or private school located in the senatorial district of the Senator who appoints him/her, or attends a virtual high school, or is a home schooled youth who is eligible to be enrolled in a public school located in the senatorial district of the Senator who appoints him/her; (3) is in the 9th-12th grade during the student's two-year term of service on the NYL; and (4) must not be related to the appointing Senator or any member of the Assembly who collaborated to appoint him/her.

2. Is there a minimum GPA required to serve on the NYL?

No. The law that established the Nevada Youth Legislature (Senate Bill No. 247 of the 2007 Legislative Session) does not require that Youth Legislators maintain any particular GPA. All eligible students who are interested in learning about—and participating in—the democratic process are encouraged to apply for the NYL.

3. May students who attend private school, virtual school or home school apply for appointment to the NYL?

Yes. Eligible students who are enrolled in public school, private school, virtual school or home school may apply for membership on the NYL.

4. May I apply for the NYL if I'm entering my senior year in high school next fall?

Ordinarily not. You must be in the 9th-12th grade during your two-year term of service on the NYL. Therefore, you may serve on the NYL during your senior year in high school. However, a student may not apply for the NYL during his/her senior year in high school. NOTE: There is one exception to this rule: a student entering the senior year of high school may apply to fill the remaining year (or less) of a two-year term created when a Youth Legislator vacates his/her seat.

5. May I apply for the NYL while I am in 8th grade?

Yes. Eligibility for NYL service is open to students in 9th-12th grades. Therefore, if a student applies while in the 8th grade, that student's term would begin in the 9th grade.

Application Process

6. How many students will be appointed to the NYL?

Twenty-one. Each of the 21 Nevada State Senators will appoint one member to the NYL.

7. Who is my Nevada State Senator?

You may obtain the name of your Nevada State Senator by visiting: <http://mapserve1.leg.state.nv.us/whoRU/>.

8. May I download an electronic copy of the application?

Yes. During application periods, an electronic copy of the application is available on the NYL website: www.leg.state.nv.us/Senate/NYL/.

9. May I submit my application electronically online?

Not via an online form. All applications must be mailed, faxed, or scanned and e-mailed to info@youthleg.state.nv.us.

10. Where do I send my application materials for the NYL?

Please send your application materials to Grant Sawyer State Office Building, c/o NYL Coordinator, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89101-1072. Do not send your application to your Senator's home. You may also fax your application to the NYL Coordinator at 775-684-6750 or scan and e-mail the application to info@youthleg.state.nv.us.

11. What is the deadline for applying for the NYL?

For the next two-year term of the Nevada Youth Legislature beginning in 2017, the window for submitting applications will open on Monday, March 20, 2017, and applications will be due by midnight the evening of Monday, April 17, 2017. Appointments will be made by June 1.

12. The application requires a letter of recommendation. May I ask a family member to write the letter of recommendation on my behalf?

No. The letter of recommendation may not be written by one of your relatives. Please choose an adult mentor, teacher, employer, or other adult who is familiar with both your interest in participating in the democratic process and your leadership skills.

13. When will Youth Legislators be appointed to serve on the NYL?

Youth Legislators will be chosen as soon as possible after the appointing Senator has reviewed the applications submitted for that Senator.

Nevada Youth Legislature Activities

14. How often does the NYL meet, and how much time will I be expected to spend at these meetings?

Each Youth Legislator is required to attend an annual training session. In odd-numbered years, this two-day session is held in Carson City in August; in even-numbered years, a one-day session is held in Las Vegas on a Saturday in September. During the school year, Youth Legislators are required to attend monthly meetings or training sessions, which normally run from 2 to 5 p.m., on rotating school days.

15. In addition to NYL meetings, will I be required to participate in—or lead—other activities?

Yes. Each Youth Legislator will be required to host at least one town hall meeting each school year. In addition, Youth Legislators are required to establish a District Youth Advisory Council (DYAC) in their senatorial district, which involves their appointing up to two DYAC representatives from each high school to serve on the DYAC. Youth Legislators are required to conduct at least two DYAC meetings each school year. Because Youth Legislators have full access to the Legislature's Constituent Services Unit (CSU), they are encouraged to work with CSU to assist their youth constituents with finding answers to issues, challenges, and problems that might be confronting them. Youth Legislators are also encouraged to testify at least once each year before a public body, such as a city council, county commission, or school board. Youth Legislators will be trained in media skills, and their names will be made available to local and statewide media as resources on stories involving the youth in Nevada; so, if called upon by the media, Youth Legislators are encouraged to serve as media sources on stories about youth and youth issues. Youth Legislators should also meet with their appointing Senators and Assembly members to establish a relationship, which can enrich both their service in the NYL (and to their constituents) and their appointing Senator's service to the youth in that senatorial district. Youth Legislators will also work together to create a Bill Draft Request (BDR) for introduction during the upcoming legislative session. In preparation for this, Youth Legislators will research their own BDR ideas and present them to the NYL for consideration during the selection process. Throughout their two-year term, there will also be opportunities for Youth Legislators to participate in optional activities, such as informational conference calls and social gatherings.

16. Will I need to miss school for NYL meetings, events, and activities?

Yes. See the previous question for more details about participation requirements. Typically, Youth Legislators need to miss just one afternoon of instruction per month to fulfill NYL requirements.

17. Are Youth Legislators required to pay for their hotel and travel expenses for attending the annual NYL training program?

No. For the NYL's annual trainings, all expenses, including air travel and hotel stays (as needed) are paid by the program.

18. If I live in rural Nevada, am I eligible for reimbursement on travel expenses to and from the monthly meetings of the Nevada Youth Legislature?

Yes. For the monthly meetings of the Nevada Youth Legislature, those Youth Legislators who need to travel 50 miles or more each way are eligible for reimbursement of their automotive travel expenses.

19. As a Youth Legislator, how much contact will I have with my Legislators (Senate and Assembly)?

Youth Legislators are strongly encouraged to work with the Legislators from their senatorial district. Because Youth Legislators represent tens of thousands of under-18-year-olds in their senatorial districts, both Senators and Assembly members can benefit from what Youth Legislators share with them about youth issues and challenges in their districts. Also, Senators and Assembly members might be interested in sponsoring legislation suggested by their Youth Legislators. Historically, when Youth Legislators have proposed legislation to their Senators, they have worked on the measures with their Senators, side by side, throughout the entire legislative process.

Attendance

20. What are the attendance requirements during my term of service?

Nevada Youth Legislators must attend all required meetings, activities, or event days as determined by the Nevada Youth Legislature (NYL) Foundation Board and/or the NYL Foundation Board Chair.

21. If I know I'm going to miss a meeting or activity, whom do I contact to be excused?

As prescribed in NRS 385.535.1.b.4, the Chair or Vice Chair of the NYL Foundation Board has the authority to determine when an absence is excused or un-excused. Events that will be excused, when requested prior to an NYL event, are those that involve family or medical emergencies, unanticipated situations, or special, *non-recurring* activities or events (e.g., county-wide debate tournament, annual awards ceremony, etc.). To receive an excused absence, the Youth Legislator must contact Senator Valerie Wiener, (Ret.), NYL Foundation Board Chair, as soon as possible, prior to the NYL event, but no later than 24 hours prior to the event. The first attempt to contact the Chair should be a telephone call at **702-221-0068**; if no contact is made by telephone, then the Youth Legislator should immediately submit an e-mail to BoardChair@youthleg.state.nv.us. Each request for excused absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

22. If I miss a meeting or activity without requesting an excused absence in advance, what will happen?

Events that will be excused retroactively, when requested following an NYL event, include: family or medical emergencies or unanticipated situations that made attendance impossible. To receive an excused absence, retroactively, the Youth Legislator must contact Senator Valerie Wiener, (Ret.), NYL Foundation Board Chair, as soon as possible following the NYL event. The first attempt to contact the Chair should be a telephone call at **702-221-0068**; if no contact is made by telephone, then the Youth Legislator should immediately submit an e-mail to BoardChair@youthleg.state.nv.us. Requests for retroactive excused absences must be submitted within seven days following meetings, activities, or event days. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

23. How does having an unexcused absence affect me?

If the Youth Legislator does not request an excused absence, either prior to or within a week following an NYL event, or if a request for an excused absence is declined, this will result in an unexcused absence. As prescribed in NRS 385.535.1.b, a Youth Legislator is only allowed one unexcused absence during a term of office. If the Youth Legislator incurs a second unexcused absence during his/her term of office, NRS 385.353.1.b.4 requires

the immediate removal of that Youth Legislator from office. A new Youth Legislator will then be appointed by the Senator from that district.

Terms of Appointment

24. How long are the terms of appointment for Youth Legislators?

Youth Legislators serve a two-year term. The term begins on June 1 of the year in which the Youth Legislators are appointed and ends on May 31, two years later.

25. May I serve for more than one term on the NYL?

Youth Legislators may be reappointed if they continue to meet the eligibility requirements.

26. If I move to, begin attending school in, or am eligible to attend school in a new State Senatorial District during my term on the NYL, may I continue to serve as a Youth Legislator from my former State Senatorial District?

Each member of the NYL must reside, attend school in, or be eligible to attend school in the State Senatorial District of the State Senator who appointed that member. If a Youth Legislator no longer meets one of these qualifications, that position on the NYL becomes vacant, and the appropriate State Senator will appoint a new member to fill that position.

Other Questions

27. Who makes decisions about the operation of the NYL program?

The policy and funding decisions about the NYL are made by the NYL Foundation (NYLF) Board, which comprises seven members who are appointed by the Legislative Commission to serve two-year terms. The NYLF Board Chair, working closely and collaboratively with the Board members and legislative staff, ensures that the curriculum, activities, and events of the program meet the highest standards of leadership development and democratic engagement.

28. Is there someone—other than those listed above—whom I should contact if I have a question about the NYL?

The NYL Coordinator at the Legislative Counsel Bureau is the primary contact for questions related to the day-to-day operations of the Nevada Youth Legislature. He can be reached at 775-684-6740 or via e-mail at info@youthleg.state.nv.us. During each two-year term, the NYL Chair and Vice Chair, both elected by the Youth Legislators, are important resources as well.

29. After I complete my service as a Youth Legislator, are there opportunities for me to stay engaged with the program and its alumni?

Yes. The NYL has an active Facebook group page, which currently involves about two-thirds of the Youth Legislators (current and alumni). This provides an excellent opportunity for the exchange of ideas and the continuity of contact that many NYL alumni have requested. Alumni have made significant contributions to the training sessions, both as advisers and mentors. In addition, the NYL Foundation Board is working with three past NYL chairs to establish opportunities for activities that serve both current Youth Legislators and NYL alumni. This is an evolving process, which encourages both current Youth Legislators and NYL alumni to enhance their involvement with the program and each other! We also sponsor an annual NYL reunion, which allows Youth Legislators and NYL alumni to connect. In addition we have established a Youth Legislator-NYL Alumni Mentorship Program that allows NYL Alumni to share their insights with current Youth Legislators.